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DAKAR PLS PASS DAO, ODC, AND RAO

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [ASEC](#) [GA](#)
SUBJECT: THE GAMBIA: TOP POLICE OFFICER FIRED

REF: BANJUL 205 ET AL

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH STAFFORD, REASON 1.4 (B AND D)

DISMISSAL OF SENIOR POLICE OFFICER

11. (C) On April 25, the GOTG announced the dismissal of the country's senior police officer, Inspector General of Police Musa Mboob and the selection of his deputy, Benedict Jammeh, as his successor. The announcement omitted any mention of the reasons for Mboob's removal, but a knowledgeable journalistic source told Ambassador that Mboob was the victim of a rivalry with Armed Forces Chief of Defense Staff (CHOD) Colonel Lang Tombong Tamba. According to our contact, Tamba had engineered Mboob's removal by complaining to President Yahya Jammeh about alleged corrupt practices by Mboob and portraying him as disloyal; Jammeh responded by ordering Mboob's dismissal.

CONVOLUTED TALE OF ABSCONDING MARABOUT

12. (C) Ambassador raised with source the convoluted story run by U.S.-based online anti-GOTG "journals" that the immediate cause of Mboob's departure was his failure to apprehend a marabout (traditional Muslim "holy man") who had recently absconded with funds supplied by Jammeh to produce the herbal elixirs used in his HIV/AIDS and asthma treatment programs (reftel). (NOTE: According to these reports, the marabout fled with the money to the Senegalese city of Kaolack; Mboob, ordered by Jammeh to track down the marabout and return him to The Gambia for prosecution, failed in his mission, as Senegalese authorities refused to hand over the marabout to the Gambian police. END NOTE) Our source responded that the reported absconding of the marabout with Jammeh's money and Senegalese authorities' refusing to surrender him were based on fact and may well have provided CHOD Tamba with further ammunition to use with Jammeh in seeking Mboob's ouster.

COMMENT

13. (C) The new Inspector General of Police hails from the President's native village of Kanilai, and his appointment -- and Mboob's dismissal -- underscores the President's ongoing, deep-seated concern to ensure loyalty at senior levels of his government's security, law enforcement, and military institutions, especially following the foiled coup plot here in March 2006. Judging from our source's remarks, CHOD Tamba succeeded in convincing the President that Mboob's loyalty -- as well as his competence -- was questionable and that his removal was in order. Mboob was well-disposed toward the Embassy and attentive to our security concerns; in our previous dealings with his successor, we have found him generally responsive. END COMMENT

